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dwelling-enclosures of the Lodge members clustered close around. As the cemeteries where old men are buried increased in size, and as, moreover, the number of burials of young men, women and children inside their dwelling-houses grew also, the original sites tended to be abandoned and new Lodges and cemeteries (such as that of the existing *La-mbet-ra* shown on the plan), as well as new dwelling-houses, began to be built rather further afield. This tendency has not, however, reached the point achieved in the Atchin double-village of Ruruar, which, as will be shown in a later volume, has now become so decentralised that the dwelling-enclosures form a kind of irregular ring round the site of the original village, which is now occupied exclusively by the cemeteries with their accompanying Lodges.

Women's Lodges

While the above account refers almost exclusively to the overt patrilineal organisation of the island, it is of interest to note the existence at the same time of Women's Lodges recorded by Godefroy on Vao, but not existing, so far as I know, elsewhere in the Small Islands.

Referring to a "large carefully guarded enclosure at the base of a slope" in which there are "five or six houses, well kept and with the ground around them carefully cleaned and even swept," Godefroy says: [1] "This collection of houses so carefully fenced . . . is strictly reserved for women. It is there that the matrons of Pete-hul and of Togh-vanu receive women of these same clans when they are about to give birth. The midwife of these two clans is assisted by their close relatives,[2] and together they give, or rather lavish care upon them over a period of three weeks. At the end of this time the mother or the grandmother of the woman who has given birth to the child comes, with other relatives, to take away the mother and her baby and bring them back to her own home." Thus "women also have places which are taboo to men. It is a fact that no men are allowed within this enclosure, and, I may add, only such women as have themselves been born there have the right of entry. A mother who has given birth there, but was not herself born there, is rigorously excluded excepting during the period of her confinement. It is for this reason that the place is called 'the birth enclosure,' [3] *hu ni-ar na woruan*. . . . It is quite simply a native lying-in ward." [4]

Special interest attaches to the name by which this enclosure is called. The term *hu ni-ar* is in fact composed of two words, *hu* which I have recorded in Vao as *hu-hu*, meaning "to suckle" or "to be suckled," [5] and *ni-ar* meaning "a fence." *Woruan* is clearly another spelling for the word

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 230.
[2] Presumably of the women in labour.
[3] "*Enclos de la naissance.*"
[4] "*Maternité.*"
[5] See p. 178. Compare Mota *hu-hu*, "to give suck."

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woroan discussed in later chapters. This is the nominal form of the verb *wor*, widely used in this part of Melanesia as meaning "to come forth," and in a special sense "to come forth from a woman," and so "to be born." In a more technical sense still, the word *wor* is used in Ambrim as a noun meaning "marriage section," in the sense explained on p. 97, and on Vao the word *woroan* is used in a number of ways, one of which appears to be "matrilineal descent group." [1] It is probably in this sense that the word is used here, for it will be noted that it is the "matrons" of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu who own these special Lodges. In other words, this rather obscure statement appears to indicate that ownership is not in the hands of women born in the village, who all marry elsewhere, but, on the contrary, in those of married women who do *not* belong by birth to the double-village in question. It would appear, both from this and from the fact that "only such women who have been born there [i.e. in this enclosure] have the right of entry," that these Lodges are not patrilineal but matrilineal institutions and represent a survival, despite the existing patrilocal organisation, of the former system of overt matrilineal descent of which traces are still to be found in the terminology of kinship.[2] This supposition is supported by Speiser's report that special houses in which women give birth are found also in the matrilineal islands of Oba and Maewo and in North Raga, but not in the patrilineal districts of South Raga or in Ambrim and Malekula.[3] Such Women's Lodges no longer exist in Atchin, where the matrilineal element in the kinship system is much weaker than it is on Vao.

Gardens

As has already been pointed out,[4] each village possesses its own tracts of land on the mainland of Malekula, where the main gardens are, and to which the natives travel daily in their canoes except during hurricanes and at times of special ritual activity. Each village has its own beach, or section of beach, on Vao, and its corresponding landing-place on the mainland. In addition to the mainland gardens, each village also possesses its share of uninhabited land on Vao. This land, however, like that on all the Small Islands, is largely given over to pigs, which roam around the villages, so that but little cultivation takes place there, and those plots that are used for gardening must be heavily fenced. Exigencies of time did not permit me to make a detailed study of land tenure on Vao, as I did on Atchin, and for all matters dealing with this and with agriculture, the seasons and the calendar, the reader is referred to my forthcoming volumes on that island. There the only gardens made on the Small Island itself are of a ritual nature. All essential cultivation takes place on the Malekulan mainland.

[1] See pp. 133, 138. [2] See p. 126. [3] Speiser, 3, p. 282. [4] See p. 25.

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presentation has been made.[1] The husband now enters the house on the pretext of fetching some tool or anything that will serve as an excuse to go in. In the presence of the women who are kneading and scraping the yams, he adopts an attitude of pleasure and utters joyful exclamations, but he does not speak a word.[2] This constitutes his presentation to the women. There is nothing left for the husband to do but to disappear, and to return to his work on the beach. His wife's brother goes with him. As for the wife's father, he seeks out, among the neighbouring huts, some man of his own age, and the rest of his day will be taken up with gossip and the lighting of interminable pipes.[3]

"Towards dark, the whole company, including the husband, prepares to take the evening meal. As during the morning, the husband occupies the position of guest. He takes part in the meal, but eats only a little.[4] As for the wife's family, they behave precisely as if they were at home, though in their son-in-law's house. When the meal is finished, they gather what is left over, to serve for their own breakfast the next morning. The husband adds produce from his own garden; at his own expense he fills his father-in-law's pipe. The food is then done up in parcels, the mother-in-law and her daughters load the parcels on their backs, and the visitors depart. The husband accompanies them a short distance, and the visit is over.

"This initial visit means that the members of the wife's family intend to take responsibility for all the care of which the young wife will shortly be in need before, during and after her confinement. This care is extended towards the child, even when it has grown to youthful manhood. The services, however, are not extended free. At the birth of a first child, the husband is obliged to present his wife's parents with a large tusked pig, worth £6.[5] Subsequent births are less heavily taxed. . . ."

Birth

In contrast to the practice on the mainland of Malekula and in the remaining Small Islands, where women give birth in their own dwelling-houses, in Vao, according to Godefroy, this takes place in one of the special women's Lodges already mentioned.[6]

[1] I.e. the husband is presented, in his own house, to his father-in-law, whom of course he has known all his life.

[2] A man may not speak to his wife's mother (see p. 135).

[3] A European innovation. There was no smoking before the advent of the white man.

[4] This also forms part of the attitude of respect incumbent on a man towards his wife's parents.

[5] The chief payment is actually made to her brother (see p. 178).

[6] See p. 73.

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844 The midwife who attends the pregnant woman at the end of the seventh moon also attends the birth, for which she receives payment in the form of a pig. No gongs are sounded at birth, but if the child is a boy a conch-shell trumpet is blown. If the boy is the father's eldest son, the blowing of the conch-shell is the signal for the entire village to raid the father's enclosure. This will be described below in the section dealing with the "Eldest Son."[1] I have no record of special rites or beliefs [845] concerning twins.[2]

846 After delivery, a number of women called *nain ghore*[3] sleep in the Lodge for a period of either five, ten or twenty days, being paid at the end of this time with money-mats varying in number with the length of their stay, and with a festive pudding with fowls in it.

I have unfortunately no details regarding delivery or the disposal of the afterbirth.[4] There are two methods of disposal of the stump of the umbilical cord (*biton*) when it withers away from the child's body. Both methods are applicable to a child of either sex, and the choice of method lies with the father. The stump must in either case be eventually placed in a *na-lil* shell, which is then deposited in a hole in the reef. If the father wishes his child to be a great shell-seeker he will tell the mother to dispose of the cord by depositing it in a *na-lil* shell in a hole in the reef. This she does on the Tenth Day after birth, when, as will be seen below, she goes to wash and throw away the leaves with which the child's excrement has been wiped up. If, on the other hand, he is afraid of the child developing a habit of hanging around the reef looking for shellfish instead of going to work in the gardens on the mainland, he will himself take charge of the stump by placing it in his ear, where by reason of its toughness it may remain for three or four years before he deposits it, as in the first case, in a *na-lil* shell in a hole in the reef.[5]

[1] See p. 180.

[2] Twins of either sex are called *na-lav*. In the brief genealogy given in Table X there are two pairs of twins, both in the same family. The first pair consisted of two Pete-hul boys, Mal-mari and Bahor (whose other name was Melteg-bimbihi). Both grew up and married and had children. When Mal-mari died, his wife Le-mbagho (of Peter-ihi) and their son Ni-al-sul went to live with his twin brother Bahor. This man Bahor in turn married Le-nimal (of Tolamp) by whom he also had twins, a boy and a girl. The boy was called Saki and the girl by the same name with the usual feminine prefix, namely Le-saki. Both these lived for about a year but then fell sick and died. In this case the tendency to generate twins seems to run in the male line, though there is not enough evidence to show whether this is a typical case.

[3] I do not know the meaning of this phrase. *Ghore* means "open" or "out."

[4] In Seniang it is buried in a hole in the house, and a fire lighted over this, over which the child is rocked to and fro that its body may be hot (Deacon, 4, p. 235). In Lambumbu it is left for five days and then buried outside (Deacon, 4, p. 238). The Banks Islands custom resembles that of Seniang, the afterbirth there being looked on as part of the child, even after it is born (see Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 144).

[5] For treatment of the umbilical cord in Seniang, Mewun and Lambumbu see Deacon, 4, pp. 225-38.